(b) In accordance with these Agreements entered into with India's trading partners certain items (340) were shifted from Restricted List/SIL to OGL on 13.4.1998 coinciding with the announcement of the Exim Policy for 1998-99.

Interests of G-8

3543. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) how far the G-8's market interests in Indian market are likely to suffer with the imposition of sanctions by the G-8 countries against India and Pakistan in the aftermath of N-Tests by India and Pakistan in May this year; and

(b) if so, what concessions and relaxations have since been secured by India from G-8 countries in the sanctions imposed by them, in return for securing G-8's market interests in this country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) Government of India is not concerned with the likely adverse impact of sanctions suffered by other countries, including the G-8, in the aftermath of the recent unclear tests carried out by India. However, it would appear that there is considerable debate in the US that the US sanctions are likely to impact on US exports to India. An 18-Member task force has been set up in the US Senate to examine the issue. In the meanwhile, the US Senate and Congress have already approved exemption from sanctions for assistance from the US Department of Commerce for agricultural exports. Medicines and Medical equipment have also been exempted. It would thus appear that G-8 countries, like the USA are reviewing the sanctions imposed by them.

Impact of Sanctions of India

3544. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Secretary of State Ms Madeleins Albright has concurred with the Union Minister of Commerce that the sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan would not only affect the two countries but also the US business to a large extent;

(b) whether the matters were discussed during the visits of the special envoy of the Prime Minister of the US; and

(c) if so, the precise subject discussed and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) the US Secretary of State has neither concurred with nor denied the Union Commerce Minister's position on sanctions imposed on India after the recent nuclear tests.

(b) and (c) Discussions of the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister with all concerned are still continuing.

Exports of Hardware

3545. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that exports of hardware has been badly hit seriously affecting the growth of hardware industry in the country;

(b) if so, the extent to which country's hardware exports suffered a set back against projection during the financial year 1997-98;

(c) what are the main causes for decline in hardware exports; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to retrieve the situation?